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U.S. Application No. 09/923,320 Examiner NGUYEN Art Unit 2154
Response to January 26, 2007 Office Action

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for notifying an offline user, the method comprising the steps of:

monitoring a total number of users who log in to a website;

~~as each user logs in,~~ comparing the total number of users to notification criteria of the offline user, the notification criteria specifying a ~~particular number~~ preset amount of users that log in to the website; and

when the total number of users exceeds the ~~the~~ [[a]] preset amount, then sending a notification to the offline user,

wherein the notification informs the offline user of an amount of activity in the website.

2. (Canceled)
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the website is a chat room and the notification criteria further comprise a topic of discussion.
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the website is a game site and the notification criteria further comprise when a high score has been exceeded.
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the website is an auction site and the notification criteria comprise entry of a bid that exceeds a high bid submitted by the offline user.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the website is an auction site and the notification criteria comprise a number of bids submitted within a certain duration.

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7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising reporting the indication to another offline user.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising sending an offline communication to the offline user in accordance with the offline user's contact information.
9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the contact information comprises a communication device type and an address of the communication device.
10. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the contact information comprises a plurality of communication device types of the offline user, addresses for each of the plurality of communication device types, and an order in which to attempt the plurality of communication device types.
11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein ~~the step of~~ sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone, a wireless telephone, a caller identification device, a wireless access protocol device, a one-way pager, and an interactive pager.
12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising ~~the steps of~~:

receiving an indication from the offline user as to whether the offline user will log in to the website; and

reporting the indication to the online user.
13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein ~~the step of~~ sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone and a wireless telephone,

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wherein the step of receiving the indication comprises receiving input of the offline user through an interactive voice response unit, and

wherein the step of reporting the indication comprises transmitting the indication to the online user through a global computer network.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 13, wherein ~~the step of~~ receiving the indication comprises receiving audio input of the offline user and converting the audio input to text for transmission through the global computer network to the online user.
15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 13, wherein ~~the step of~~ receiving the indication comprises receiving audio input of the offline user, recording the audio input as a digital audio file, and transmitting the digital audio file through the global computer network to the online user.
16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein ~~the step of~~ sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of an interactive pager and a wireless access protocol device,
wherein ~~the step of~~ receiving the indication comprises receiving input of the offline user from the interactive pager or the wireless access protocol device, and
wherein ~~the step of~~ reporting the indication comprises transmitting the indication to the online user through the global computer network.
17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the input comprises one of a standard message and a customized message.
18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the notification comprises the notification criteria and a time and a date that the notification criteria was satisfied.
19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, further comprising ~~the step of~~ requiring the offline user to provide a passcode before forwarding the offline communication.

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20. (Currently Amended) A computer providing notification of an online interaction occurring on a global computer network, the computer performing ~~the steps of:~~
- monitoring a total number of users who log in to a website;
~~when a as each~~ user logs in, comparing the total number of users to notification criteria of an offline user, the notification criteria specifying a preset amount ~~particular number of users that log in to the website; and~~
when the total number of users exceeds the ~~[[a]]~~ preset amount, then sending a notification to the offline user,
- wherein the notification informs the offline user of an amount of activity in the website.
21. (Previously Presented) The computer of claim 20, wherein the website is a chat room and the notification criteria further comprise a topic of discussion.
22. (Previously Presented) The computer of claim 20, wherein the website is a game site and the notification criteria further comprise when a high score has been exceeded.
23. (Previously Presented) The computer of claim 20, wherein the website is an auction site and the notification criteria comprise entry of a bid that exceeds a high bid submitted by the offline user.
24. (Currently Amended) The computer of claim 20, wherein the computer further performs ~~the step of~~ sending an offline communication to the offline user in accordance with the offline user's contact information.
25. (Previously Presented) The computer of claim 24, wherein the contact information comprises a communication device type and an address of the communication device.

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26. (Previously Presented) The computer of claim 24, wherein the contact information comprises a plurality of communication device types of the offline user, addresses for each of the plurality of communication device types, and an order in which to attempt the plurality of communication device types.
27. (Currently Amended) The computer of claim 24, wherein ~~the step of sending the offline communication~~ comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone, a wireless telephone, a caller identification device, a wireless access protocol device, a one-way pager, and an interactive pager.
28. (Currently Amended) The computer of claim 20, wherein the computer further performs ~~the following steps~~:
- receiving an indication as to whether the offline user will log in to the website;
and
reporting the indication to the online user.
29. (Currently Amended) The computer of claim 24, wherein ~~the step of sending the offline communication~~ comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone and a wireless telephone,
- wherein ~~the step of receiving the indication~~ comprises receiving input of the offline user through an interactive voice response unit, and
- wherein ~~the step of reporting the indication~~ comprises transmitting the indication to the online user through a global computer network.
30. (Currently Amended) A system providing notification of an online interaction occurring on a global computer network, the system performing ~~the steps of~~:
- monitoring a total number of users who log in to a website;

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~~as each user logs in,~~ comparing the total number of users to notification criteria of an offline user, the notification criteria specifying a preset amount ~~particular number~~ of users that log in to the website; and

when the total number of users exceeds the ~~the~~ [[a]] preset amount, then sending an offline communication to the offline user,

wherein the offline communication notifies the offline user of an amount of activity in the website.

31. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 30, wherein the website is a chat room and the notification criteria further comprise a topic of discussion.
32. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 30, wherein the website is a game site and the notification criteria further comprise when a high score has been exceeded.
33. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 30, wherein the website is an auction site and the notification criteria comprise entry of a bid that exceeds a high bid submitted by the offline user.
34. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the system further performs ~~the step of~~ sending an offline communication to the offline user in accordance with the offline user's contact information.
35. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, wherein the contact information comprises a communication device type and an address of the communication device.
36. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, wherein the contact information comprises a plurality of communication device types of the offline user, addresses for each of the plurality of communication device types, and an order in which to attempt the plurality of communication device types.

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37. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 34, wherein ~~the step of~~ sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone, a wireless telephone, a caller identification device, a wireless access protocol device, a one-way pager, and an interactive pager.
38. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 30, wherein the system further performs ~~the following steps~~:
- receiving an indication from the offline user as to whether the offline user will log in to the website; and
- reporting the indication to an online user.
39. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 38, wherein ~~the step of~~ sending the offline communication comprises sending the offline communication to one of a wireline telephone and a wireless telephone,
- wherein ~~the step of~~ receiving the indication comprises receiving input of the offline user through an interactive voice response unit, and
- wherein ~~the step of~~ reporting the indication comprises transmitting the indication to the online user through a global computer network.
40. (Currently Amended) A system for notifying an offline user of an online interaction, the system comprising:
- (a) a means for retrieving notification criteria of the offline user, the notification criteria specifying a preset amount ~~particular number~~ of users that log in to a website;
 - (b) a means for monitoring a total number of users who log in to the website;
 - (c) a means for comparing the total number of logged in users to the notification criteria; and

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- (d) a means for sending a notification that the total number of users logged in to the website exceeds the ~~the~~ ~~[[a]]~~ preset amount, the notification initiating an offline communication to the offline user and informing the offline user of an amount of activity in the website.
41. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 40, wherein the website is one of a chat room, a game site, and an auction.
42. (Currently Amended) A method for notifying an offline user of an interaction in which the offline user could participate, wherein the interaction occurs on a website, the method comprising the steps of:
- retrieving notification criteria ~~conditions~~ under which to notify the offline user, the notification criteria ~~conditions~~ specifying a preset amount ~~particular number~~ of users that log in to the website;
- monitoring a total number users who log in to the website;
- comparing the total number of logged in users to the ~~the~~ ~~[[a]]~~ preset amount; and
- when if the total number of logged in users exceeds the preset amount, then sending a notification to the offline user informing the offline user of an amount of activity in the website.
43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42, wherein the website is one of a chat site, a game site, and an auction site.
44. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 42, further comprising ~~the step of~~ sending an offline communication to the offline user in accordance with the offline user's contact information.
45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42, wherein when the website is a game site, then sending the notification when a high score has been exceeded.

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46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein the offline communication is one of a wireline telephone call, a wireless telephone call, a message sent to a caller identification device, a message sent to a wireless access protocol device, a message sent to a one-way pager, and a message sent to an interactive pager.

47. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 42, further comprising ~~the steps of:~~

receiving an indication as to whether the offline user will join the interaction; and
reporting the indication to users logged into the website.

48. (Currently Amended) A method for notifying an offline user of an interaction in which the offline user could participate, wherein the interaction occurs on an instant messaging service, the method comprising ~~the steps of:~~

monitoring a total number of users that log into the instant messaging service;
when if the total number of logged in users exceeds a predefined amount, then
sending a notification to the offline user informing the offline user of an amount of
activity in the instant messaging service;

receiving an indication as to whether the offline user will join the instant
messaging service; and

reporting the indication to users logged into the instant messaging service.

49. (Canceled)

50. (Canceled)

51. (Currently Amended) A method for notifying an offline user of activities occurring on an auction website, the method comprising ~~the steps of:~~

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retrieving notification criteria ~~conditions~~ under which to notify the offline user,
the notification criteria ~~conditions~~ specifying a preset amount ~~number~~ of users that log in
to the auction website;

monitoring a total number of users who log in to the auction website;

comparing the total number of logged in users to the preset amount ~~conditions~~;

and

when if the activities satisfy the notification criteria ~~conditions~~, sending a
notification to the offline user informing the offline user of a level of activity in the
auction website.

52. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 51, wherein the notification criteria
~~conditions~~ are one of:

when a bid is entered that exceeds a high bid of the offline user, and

when the number of bids entered with a duration exceeds a preset amount.

53. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 51, further comprising ~~the steps of~~:

receiving an indication as to whether the offline user will log onto the auction
website; and

reporting the indication to a user logged into the auction website.

54. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 51, further comprising ~~the step of~~ reporting a
high bid from the offline user to users logged into the auction website.

55. (Cancel)

56. (Cancel)

57. (Cancel)